DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 373 128 UD 030 024

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TITLE The Dreamkeepers. Successful Teachers of African American Children.
REPORT NO ISBN-1-55542-668-9
PUB DATE 1 Nov 94
NOTE 196p.
AVAILABLE FROM Jossey-Bass Inc., 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 ($22).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Black Students; Classroom Communication; *Cultural Education; Cultural Pluralism; Curriculum Development; *Educational Improvement; Elementary School Teachers; Elementary Secondary Education; Futures (of Society); *Instructional Materials; Racial Relations; Secondary School Teachers; Student Improvement; Student Motivation; *Success; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *African Americans

ABSTRACT

This book highlights several individuals and programs that have been responsible for improving the academic achievement of African-American students. The author reports on the positive results of culturally conscious education and highlights eight teachers who, though they differ in personal style and methods, share an approach to teaching that strengthens cultural identity. Chapter 1 points to the growing disaffection of African Americans with the kind of education their children receive today in the public schools. Chapter 2 discusses the growing educational and anthropological literature on ways in which schools can be made more compatible with the students' cultural backgrounds. The chapter identifies a lack in the literature on the experiences of African-American students specifically and offers culturally relevant teaching as a way to address this gap. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 discuss three critical aspects of culturally relevant teaching: the teachers' conceptions of themselves and others; the manner in which classroom social interaction is structured; and the teachers' conception of knowledge. Chapter 6 focuses on three teachers in the study and their teaching of elementary literacy and mathematics programs. The final chapter examines prospects for improving the academic performance and the school experiences of African-American students. Appendixes address methodological and contextual issues. (GLR)

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